

THE
COMMON SCHOOL JOURNAL.

VOL. VI.

BOSTON, MAY 1, 1844.

No. 9.

SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE BOARD
OF EDUCATION.

[Continued from page 136.]

the torrents dashing down the mountain sides, cried out, Danube, Elbe, Vistula, Oder, &c. The next moment I heard a succession of small strokes or taps, so rapid as to be almost indistinguishable, and hardly had my eye time to discern a large number of dots made along the margins of the rivers, when the shout of Lintz, Vienna, Prague, Dresden, Berlin, &c. struck my ear. At this point in the exercise, the spot which had been occupied on the blackboard was nearly a circle, of which the starting point, or place where the teacher first began, was the centre; but now a few additional strokes around the circumference of the incipient continent, extended the mountain ranges outwards towards the plains,—the children responding the names of the countries in which they respectively lay. With a few more flourishes the rivers flowed onwards towards their several terminations, and by another succession of dots, new cities sprang up along their banks. By this time the children had become as much excited as though they had been present at a world-making. They rose in their seats, they flung out both hands, their eyes kindled, and their voices became almost vociferous as they cried out the names of the different places, which under the magic of the teacher's crayon rose into view. Within ten minutes from the commencement of the lesson, there stood upon the blackboard a beautiful map of Germany, with its mountains, principal rivers and cities, the coast of the German ocean, of the Baltic and the Black seas; and all so accurately proportioned that I think only slight errors would have been found had it been subjected to the test of a scale of miles. A part of this time was taken up in correcting a few mistakes of the pupils; for the teacher's mind seemed to be in his ear as well as in his hand, and notwithstanding the astonishing celerity of his movements, he detected erroneous answers and turned round to correct them. The rest of the recitation consisted in questions and answers respecting productions, climate, soil, animals, &c. &c.

Many of the cosmogonists suppose that after the creation of the world, and when its whole surface was as yet fluid, the solid continents rose gradually from beneath the sea,—first the

loftiest peaks of the Andes, for instance, emerged from the deep, and as they reached a higher and a higher point of elevation, the rivers began to flow down their sides, until at last,—the lofty mountains having attained their height, the mighty rivers their extent and volume, and the continent its amplitude,—cultivation began, and cities and towns were built. The lesson I have described was a beautiful illustration of that idea,—with one advantage over the original scene itself, that the spectator had no need of waiting through all the geological epochs to see the work completed.

Compare the effect of such a lesson as this, both as to the amount of the knowledge communicated, and the vividness and of course the permanence of the ideas obtained, with a lesson where the scholars look out a few names of places on a lifeless atlas, but never send their imaginations abroad over the earth; and where the teacher sits listlessly down before them to interrogate them from a book, in which all the questions are printed at full length, to supersede on his part all necessity of knowledge.

Thoroughly and beautifully as I saw some departments of geography taught in the Common Schools of Prussia, traced out into their connections with commerce, manufactures, and history, I found but few of this class of schools in which *universal* geography could, with any propriety, be considered as a part of the course. The geography of their own country was minutely investigated. That of the western hemisphere was very little understood. But this should be said, that as far as they professed to teach, they taught thoroughly and well.*

* The Germans seem to me to be the best map-engravers in the world. Their maps are at once beautiful and cheap. To show to what an extraordinary length they have gone in representing the results of science to the eye, I subjoin the titles of several maps which have been prepared by that distinguished artist, Professor Berghaus, of Potsdam.

Map illustrating the diffusion of heat over the surface of Europe.

Map of the Atlantic Ocean, showing the currents, the great commercial thoroughfares, the diffusion of heat, banks, and portions of the bottom of the sea, &c.

Map of the Pacific Ocean, its currents, thoroughfares, and temperature.

Map representing the lines of equal intensity of magnetic power, (Isodynamic lines,) according to the observations made between 1790 and 1830.

Map of Humboldt's system of Isothermal curves.

Map of tides.

Map of the German Ocean with the neighboring parts of the Atlantic, its tides, and the state of the bed of the sea.

Map of the volcanic bands, and the central groups of the Pacific.

Map,—Sketch of the geographical distribution of plants. Spread of plants in a perpendicular direction. Principal circumstances affecting the spread of vegetation. Relative curves of Monocotyledonous and Dicotyledonous plants on the Swiss Alps. Graphic statistics of particular families of plants. Outlines of some forms of plants.

Map of Isothermal curves of the northern hemisphere.

Map,—General view of mean barometrical heights near the seashore; and the variation of the weight of the atmosphere.

Map of German rivers,—the Rhine, Elbe, and Oder.

Map,—View of the distribution of the solid and fluid parts of the earth; also of the variety in the form of surface, &c. &c.

Map of Isodynamic lines in the horizontal projection, for the average point of the meridian of Paris, and of the parallels 60° of north and south latitude.

Map of the mean of the temperature upon the whole earth, founded upon observations in 307 places. Graphic description of the course of temperature, for daily and yearly periods, in all zones.

EXERCISES IN THINKING. KNOWLEDGE OF NATURE. KNOWLEDGE OF
THE WORLD. KNOWLEDGE OF SOCIETY.

In the "Study-Plans" of all the schools in the North of Prussia, I found most, and in some of them all of the above subjects of lessons. To each was assigned its separate hour and place in the routine of exercises. For brevity's sake, however, and because the topics naturally run into each other, I shall attempt to describe them together.

These lessons consisted of familiar conversations between teacher and pupils, on subjects adapted to the age, capacities and proficiency of the latter. With the youngest classes, things immediately around them,—the schoolroom and the materials of which it had been built; its different parts, as foundation, floor, walls, ceiling, roof, windows, doors, fire-place; its furniture and apparatus; its books, slates, paper; the clothes of the pupils, and the materials from which they were made; their food and play-things; the duties of children to animals, to each other, to their parents, neighbors, to the old, to their Maker,—

Map,—Currents of air on the north Atlantic ocean to the western part of the Old and to the eastern part of the New World.

Map,—Hydro-historic survey of the state of the Oder in the half century from 1781 to 1830.

Map,—Survey of the spread of the most important cultivable trees and shrubs, &c. &c.

Map of the volcanic appearances of the Old World in and around the Atlantic ocean.

Map of the "Specialia" of the volcanic band of the Atlantic ocean.

Map,—Circles of the spread of the most important cultivable growths, and also a notice of the course of the Isotheren and Isochimenen, (*or places which show the same degree of heat in summer and of cold in winter.*)

Map of the tabular representation of the statistics of the vegetable kingdom, in Europe.

Map,—Botanic, geographic, statistic map of Europe.

Map of winds for all the earth.

Map,—Physical, of the Indian ocean.

Map of the volcanic kingdom of Guatemala, the isthmus of Tehuantepec, Nicaragua and Panama, and the central volcanoes of the Southern ocean.

Map of the variations of the magnetic meridians and parallels, &c.

Map,—Survey of the proportions of rain in Europe.

Map,—Survey of the meteorological stations in Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands, &c.

Map of the ideal profile of a part of the earth's rind, with the plants and animals, drawn by Joseph Fisher, according to the selection and arrangement of Dr. Buckland.

Map,—Botanic map of Germany, containing statistics of the most distinguished families of plants.

Map,—Hyetographic (*description of rain,*) map of the earth.

Map,—Hyetomaris (denoting the quantity of dampness in the atmosphere,) observations.

Map,—The warm currents of the Atlantic and the cold stream of the Pacific, in parallels represented according to geographical situation and extent.

Map of Asia and Europe in reference to running waters and their distribution into river basins, (Gebiete.)

Map,—Comparative survey of the state of the Rhine, the Weser, the Elbe and the Oder, from 1831 to 1840.

Map,—Geographic extent of thunder storms in Europe.

Map,—River-basins of the New World.

Map,—Maelstrom, &c.

Map,—Mountain chains in Asia and Europe.

Map,—Great mountain system of Europe.

Map,—Mountain chains in North America.

these are specimens of a vast variety of subjects embraced under one or another of the above heads. As the children advanced in age and attainments, and had acquired full and definite notions of the visible and tangible existences around them, and also of time and space, so that they could understand descriptions of the unseen and the remote, the scope of these lessons was enlarged, so as to take in the different kingdoms of nature, the arts, trades and occupations of men, and the more complicated affairs of society.

When visiting the schools in Leipsic, I remarked to the superintendent, that most accomplished educationist, Dr. Vogel, that I did not see on the "Study-Plan" of his schools, the title, "Exercises in Thinking." His reply was, "No,—for I consider it a *sin* in any teacher not to lead his pupils to think, in regard to all the subjects he teaches." He did not call it an omission or even a disqualification in a teacher, if he did not awaken thought in the minds of his pupils, but he peremptorily denounced it as a "*sin*." Alas! thought I, what expiation will be sufficient for many of us who have had charge of the young!

It is obvious from the account I have given of these primary lessons, that there is no restriction as to the choice of subjects, and no limits to the extent of information that may be engrafted upon them. What more natural than that a kind teacher should attempt to gain the attention and win the good-will of a brisk, eager-minded boy just entering his school, by speaking to him about the domestic animals which he plays with, or tends at home,—the dog, the cat, the sheep, the horse, the cow? Yet, without any interruption or overleaping of natural boundaries, this simple lesson may be expanded into a knowledge of all quadrupeds, their characteristics and habits of life, the uses of their flesh, skins, fur, bones, horns or ivory, the parts of the world where they live, &c. &c. So if a teacher begins to converse with a boy about domestic fowls, there is no limit, save in his own knowledge, until he has exhausted the whole subject of ornithology,—the varieties of birds, their plumage, their uses, their migratory habits, &c. &c. What more natural than that a benevolent teacher should ask a blushing little girl about the flowers in her vases or garden at home? and yet, this having been done, the door is opened that leads to all botanical knowledge,—to the flowers of all the seasons and all the zones, to the trees cultivated by the hand of man, or the primeval forests that darken the face of continents. Few children go to school who have not seen a fish,—at least a minnow in a pool. Begin with this, and nature opposes no barrier until the wonders of the deep are exhausted. Let the schoolhouse, as I said, be the first lesson; and to a mind replenished with knowledge, not only all the different kinds of edifices,—the dwelling-house, the church, the court house, the palace, the temple,—are at once associated; but all the different orders of architecture,—Corinthian, Ionic, Doric, Egyptian, Gothic, &c.—rise to the view. How many different materials have been brought together for the construction of the schoolhouse,—stone, wood, nails, glass, bricks, mortar,

paints, materials used in glazing, &c. &c. Each one of these belongs to a different department of nature; and when an accomplished teacher has once set foot in any one of these provinces, he sees a thousand interesting objects around him, as it were, soliciting his attention. Then each one of these materials has its artificer; and thus all the mechanical trades may be brought under consideration,—the house builder's, the mason's, the plumber's, the glazier's, the locksmith's, &c. A single article may be viewed under different aspects,—as, in speaking of a lock, one may consider the nature and properties of iron,—its cohesiveness, malleability, &c., its utility, or the variety of utensils into which it may be wrought; or the conversation may be turned to the particular object and uses of the lock, and upon these a lesson on the rights of property, the duty of honesty, the guilt of theft and robbery, &c., be engrafted. So in speaking of the beauties and riches and wonders of nature,—of the revolution of the seasons, the glory of spring, the exuberance of autumn, the grandeur of the mountain, the magnificence of the firmament, the child's mind may be turned to a contemplation of the power and goodness of God. I found these religious aspects of nature to be most frequently adverted to; and was daily delighted with the reverent and loving manner in which the name of the Deity was always spoken,—“*Der liebe Gott*,” the *dear* God, was the universal form of expression; and the name of the Creator of heaven and earth was hardly ever spoken, without this epithet of endearment.

It is easy also to see that a description of the grounds about the schoolhouse or the paternal mansion, and of the road leading from one of these places to the other, is the true starting-point of all geographical knowledge; and, this once begun, there is no terminus, until all modern and ancient geography, and all travels and explorations by sea and land, are exhausted. So the boy's nest of marbles may be the nucleus of all mineralogy; his top, his kite, his little wind-wheel or water-wheel, the salient point of all mechanics and technology; and the stories he has heard about the last king or the aged king, the first chapter in universal history.

I know full well that the extent and variety of subjects said to be taught to young children in the Prussian schools, have been often sneered at.

In a late speech, made on a public occasion, by one of the distinguished politicians in our country, the idea of teaching the natural sciences in our Common Schools was made a theme for ridicule. Let it be understood in what manner an accomplished teacher may impart a great amount of useful knowledge on these subjects, and perhaps awaken minds which may hereafter adorn the age, and benefit mankind by their discoveries, and it will be easily seen to which party the ridicule most justly attaches. “What,” say the objectors, “teach children botany, and the unintelligible and almost unspeakable names, Monandria, Diandria, Triandria, &c.;—or zoology, with such technical terms as Mollusca, Crustacea, Vertebrata, Mammalia, &c.,—the thing is impossible!” The Prussian children are not thus taught.

For years, their lessons are free from all the technicalities of science. The knowledge they already possess about common things is made the nucleus around which to collect more; and the language with which they are already familiar becomes the medium through which to communicate new ideas, and by which, whenever necessary, to explain new terms. There is no difficulty in explaining to a child, seven years of age, the distinctive marks by which nature intimates to us, at first sight, whether a plant is healthful or poisonous; or those by which, on inspecting the skeleton of an animal that lived thousands of years ago, we know whether it lived upon grass or grain or flesh. It is in this way that the pupil's mind is carried forward by an actual knowledge of things, until the time arrives for giving him classifications and nomenclatures. When a child knows a great many particular or individual things, he begins to perceive resemblances between some of them; and they then naturally assort themselves, as it were, in his mind, and arrange themselves into different groups. Then, by the aid of a teacher, he perfects a scientific classification among them,—bringing into each group all that belong to it. But soon the number of individuals in each group becomes so numerous, that he wants a cord to tie them together, or a vessel in which to hold them. Then, from the nomenclature of science, he receives a name which binds all the individuals of that group into one, ever afterwards. It is now that he perceives the truth and the beauty of classification and nomenclature. An infant that has more red and white beads than it can hold in its hands, and to prevent them from rolling about the floor and being lost, collects them together, putting the white in one cup and the red in another, and sits and smiles at its work, has gone through with precisely the same description of mental process that Cuvier and Linneus did, when they summoned the vast varieties of the animal and vegetable kingdoms into their spiritual presence, and commanded the countless hosts to arrange themselves into their respective genera, orders, and species.

Our notions respecting the expediency or propriety of introducing the higher branches, as they are called, into our Common Schools, are formed from a knowledge of our own school teachers, and of the habits that prevail in most of the schools themselves. With us, it too often happens that if a higher branch,—geometry, natural philosophy, zoology, botany,—is to be taught, both teacher and class must have text-books. At the beginning of these text-books, all the technical names and definitions belonging to the subject are set down. These, before the pupil has any practical idea of their meaning, must be committed to memory. The book is then studied, chapter by chapter. At the bottom of each page, or at the ends of the sections, are questions printed at full length. At the recitations, the teacher holds on by these leading-strings. He introduces no collateral knowledge. He exhibits no relation between what is contained in the book, and other kindred subjects, or the actual business of men and the affairs of life. At length the day of examination comes. The pupils rehearse from memory

with a suspicious fluency; or, being asked for some useful application of their knowledge,—some practical connection between that knowledge and the concerns of life,—they are silent, or give some ridiculous answer, which at once disparages science and gratifies the ill-humor of some ignorant satirist. Of course, the teaching of the higher branches falls into disrepute in the minds of all sensible men,—as, under such circumstances, it ought to do. But the Prussian teacher has no book. He needs none. He teaches from a full mind. He cumbers and darkens the subject with no technical phraseology. He observes what proficiency the child has made, and then adapts his instructions, both in quality and amount, to the necessity of the case. He answers all questions. He solves all doubts. It is one of his objects, at every recitation, so to present ideas, that they shall start doubts and provoke questions. He connects the subject of each lesson with all kindred and collateral ones; and shows its relation to the every-day duties and business of life; and should the most ignorant man, or the most destitute vagrant in society, ask him “of what use such knowledge can be?” he will prove to him, in a word, that some of his own pleasures or means of subsistence are dependent upon it, or have been created or improved by it.

In the mean time, the children are delighted. Their perceptive powers are exercised. Their reflecting faculties are developed. Their moral sentiments are cultivated. All the attributes of the mind within, find answering qualities in the world without. Instead of any longer regarding the earth as a huge mass of dead matter,—without variety and without life,—its beautiful and boundless diversities of substance, its latent vitality and energies, gradually dawn forth, until, at length, they illuminate the whole soul, challenging its admiration for their utility, and its homage for the bounty of their Creator.

There are other points pertaining to the qualification of teachers, which would perhaps strike a visiter or spectator more strongly than the power of giving the kind of lessons I have described; but probably there is nothing which, at the distance of four thousand miles, would give to a reader or hearer so adequate an idea of intelligence and capacity, as a full understanding of the scope and character of this class of exercises. Suppose, on the one hand, a teacher to be introduced into a school, who is competent to address children on this great range and variety of subjects, and to address them in such a manner as to arouse their curiosity, command their attention, and supply them not only with knowledge, but with an inextinguishable love for it;—suppose such a teacher to be able to give one, and sometimes two such lessons a day,—that is, from two hundred to four hundred lessons in a year, to the same class, and to carry his classes, in this way, through their eight years' schooling. On the other hand, suppose a young man coming fresh from the plough, the workshop, or the anvil;—or, what is no better,—from Greek and Latin classics,—and suppose his knowledge on the above enumerated subjects to be divided into four hundred, or even into two hundred parts, and that only

one two-hundredth portion of that stock of knowledge should be administered to the children in a day. Let us suppose all this, and we shall have some more adequate idea of the different advantages of children, at the present time, in different parts of the world. In Prussia, the theory, and the practice under it, are,—not that three years' study under the best masters qualifies a talented and devoted man to become a teacher,—but that three years of such *general* preparation may qualify one for that *particular* and *daily* preparation which is to be made before meeting a class in school. And a good Prussian teacher no more thinks of meeting his classes without this daily preparation, than a distinguished lawyer or clergyman amongst ourselves would think of managing a cause before court and jury, or preaching a sermon, without special reading and forethought.

It is easy to see, from the above account, how such a variety of subjects can be taught simultaneously in school, without any interference with each other;—nay, that the “common bond,” which, as Cicero says, binds all sciences together, should only increase their unity as it enlarges their number.

BIBLE HISTORY AND BIBLE KNOWLEDGE.

Nothing receives more attention in the Prussian schools than the Bible. It is taken up early and studied systematically. The great events recorded in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament; the character and lives of those wonderful men who, from age to age, were brought upon the stage of action, and through whose agency the future history and destiny of the race were to be so much modified; and especially, those sublime views of duty and of morality which are brought to light in the Gospel,—these are topics of daily and earnest inculcation, in every school. To these, in some schools, is added the history of the Christian religion, in connection with contemporary civil history. So far as the Bible lessons are concerned, I can ratify the strong statements made by Professor Stowe, in regard to the absence of sectarian instruction, or endeavors at proselytism. The teacher being amply possessed of a knowledge of the whole chain of events, and of all biographical incidents; and bringing to the exercise a heart glowing with love to man, and with devotion to his duty as a former of the character of children, has no necessity or occasion to fall back upon the formulas of a creed. It is when a teacher has no knowledge of the wonderful works of God, and of the benevolence of the design in which they were created; when he has no power of explaining and applying the beautiful incidents in the lives of prophets and apostles, and especially, the perfect example which is given to men in the life of Jesus Christ; it is then, that, in attempting to give religious instruction, he is, as it were, constrained to recur again and again to the few words or sentences of his form of faith, whatever that faith may be; and, therefore, when giving the second lesson, it will be little more than a repetition of the first, and the two hundredth lesson, at the end of the

year, will differ from that at the beginning only in accumulated wearisomeness and monotony.

There are one or two facts, however, which Professor Stowe has omitted to mention, and without a knowledge of which, one would form very erroneous ideas respecting the character of some of the religious instruction in the Prussian schools. In all the Protestant schools, Luther's Catechism is regularly taught; and in all the Roman Catholic schools, the Catechism of that communion. When the schools are mixed, they have combined literary with separate religious instruction; and here all the doctrines of the respective denominations are taught early and most assiduously. I well remember hearing a Roman Catholic priest inculcating upon a class of very young children the doctrine of transubstantiation. He illustrated it by the miracle of the water changed to wine, at the marriage feast in Cana; and said that he who could turn water into wine, could turn his own blood into the same element, and also his body into bread to be eaten with it. Contrary, then, to the principles of our own law, sectarianism is taught in all Prussian schools; but it is nevertheless true, as Professor Stowe says, that the Bible can be taught, and is taught, without it.

MUSIC.

All Prussian teachers are masters not only of vocal, but of instrumental music. One is as certain to see a violin as a black-board, in every schoolroom. Generally speaking, the teachers whom I saw, played upon the organ also, and some of them upon the piano and other instruments. Music was not only taught in school as an accomplishment, but used as a recreation. It is a moral means of great efficacy. Its practice promotes health; it disarms anger, softens rough and turbulent natures, socializes, and brings the whole mind, as it were, into a state of fusion, from which condition the teacher can mould it into what forms he will, as it cools and hardens.

Were it not that this Report is extending to so great a length, I should say much more on the advantages of teaching music in all our schools.

All the subjects I have enumerated, were taught in all the schools I visited, whether in city or country, for the rich or for the poor. In the lowest school in the smallest and obscurest village, or for the poorest class in over-crowded cities; in the schools connected with pauper establishments, with houses of correction or with prisons,—in all these, there was a teacher of *mature age*, of simple, unaffected and decorous manners, benevolent in his expression, kind and genial in his intercourse with the young, and of such attainments and resources as qualified him not only to lay down the abstract principles of the above range of studies, but, by familiar illustration and apposite example, to commend them to the attention of the children.

I speak of the teachers whom I saw, and with whom I had more or less of personal intercourse; and, after some opportu-

nity for the observation of public assemblies or bodies of men,—I do not hesitate to say, that if those teachers were brought together, in one body, I believe they would form as dignified, intelligent, benevolent-looking a company of men as could be collected from the same amount of population in any country. They were alike free from arrogant pretension and from the affectation of humility. It has been often remarked, both in England and in this country, that the nature of a school teacher's occupation exposes him in some degree to overbearing manners, and to dogmatism in the statement of his opinions. Accustomed to the exercise of supreme authority, moving among those who are so much his inferiors in point of attainment, perhaps it is proof of a very well-balanced mind, if he keeps himself free from assumption in opinion and haughtiness of demeanor. Especially are such faults or vices apt to spring up in weak or ill-furnished minds. A teacher who cannot rule by love, must do so by fear. A teacher who cannot supply material for the activity of his pupils' minds by his talent, must put down that activity by force. A teacher who cannot answer all the questions and solve all the doubts of a scholar as they arise, must assume an awful and mysterious air, and must expound in oracles, which themselves need more explanation than the original difficulty. When a teacher knows much and is master of his whole subject, he can afford to be modest and unpretending. But when the head is the only text-book, and the teacher has not been previously prepared, he must, of course, have a small library. Among all the Prussian and Saxon teachers whom I saw, there were not half a dozen instances to remind one of those unpleasant characteristics,—what Lord Bacon would call the "*idol of the tribe*," or profession,—which sometimes degrade the name and disparage the sacred calling of a teacher. Generally speaking, there seemed to be a strong love for the employment, always a devotion to duty, and a profound conviction of the importance and sacredness of the office they filled. The only striking instance of disingenuousness or attempt at deception, which I saw, was that of a teacher who looked over the manuscript books of a large class of his scholars, selected the best, and, bringing it to me, said, "In seeing one you see all."

Whence came this beneficent order of men, scattered over the whole country, moulding the character of its people, and carrying them forward in a career of civilization more rapidly than any other people in the world are now advancing? This is a question which can be answered only by giving an account of the

SEMINARIES FOR TEACHERS.

From the year 1820 to 1830 or 1835, it was customary, in all accounts of Prussian education, to mention the number of these Seminaries for Teachers. This item of information has now become unimportant, as there are seminaries sufficient to supply the wants of the whole country. The stated term of residence at these seminaries is three years. Lately, and in a few

places, a class of preliminary institutions has sprung up,—institutions where pupils are received in order to determine whether they are fit to become candidates to be candidates. As a pupil of the seminary is liable to be set aside for incompetency, even after a three years' course of study; so the pupils of these preliminary institutions, after having gone through with a shorter course, are liable to be set aside for incompetency to become competent.

Let us look for a moment at the guards and securities which, in that country, environ this sacred calling. In the first place, the teacher's profession holds such a high rank in public estimation, that none who have failed in other employments or departments of business, are encouraged to look upon school-keeping as an ultimate resource. Those, too, who, from any cause, despair of success in other departments of business or walks of life, have very slender prospects in looking forward to this. These considerations exclude at once all that inferior order of men, who, in some countries, constitute the main body of the teachers. Then come,—though only in some parts of Prussia,—these preliminary schools, where those who wish eventually to become teachers, go, in order to have their natural qualities and adaptation for school-keeping tested;—for it must be borne in mind that a man may have the most unexceptionable character, may be capable of mastering all the branches of study, may even be able to make most brilliant recitations from day to day; and yet, from some coldness or repulsiveness of manner, from harshness of voice, from some natural defect in his person or in one of his senses, he may be adjudged an unsuitable model or archetype for children to be conformed to, or to grow by; and hence he may be dismissed at the end of his probationary term of six months. At one of these preparatory schools, which I visited, the list of subjects at the examination,—a part of which I saw,—was divided into two classes, as follows:—1. Readiness in thinking, German language, including orthography and composition, history, description of the earth, knowledge of nature, thorough bass, calligraphy, drawing. 2. Religion, knowledge of the Bible, knowledge of nature, mental arithmetic, singing, violin playing, and readiness or facility in speaking.* The examination in all the branches of the first class was conducted in writing. To test a pupil's readiness in thinking, for instance, several topics for composition are given out, and after the lapse of a certain number of minutes, whatever has been written must be handed in to the examiners. So questions in arithmetic are given, and the time occupied by the pupils in solving them, is a test of their quickness of thought, or power of commanding their own resources. This facility, or faculty, is considered of great importance in a teacher.† In the second class of subjects

* It was a matter of great surprise to me, that, among the variety of branches taught in the People's Schools, I no where found *Astronomy* in the number. I know not how to account for the omission of a subject at once so enlarging to the intellect and so stimulating to devotional feelings.

† The above described is a very common method of examining in the gymnasia

the pupils were examined *orally*. Two entire days were occupied in examining a class of thirty pupils, and only twenty-one were admitted to the seminary school;—that is, only about two thirds were considered to be eligible *to become eligible*, as teachers, after three years' further study. Thus, in this first process, the chaff is winnowed out, and not a few of the lighter grains of the wheat.

It is to be understood that those who enter the seminary directly, and without this preliminary trial, have already studied, under able masters in the Common Schools, at least all the branches I have above described. The first two of the three years, they expend mainly in reviewing and expanding their elementary knowledge. The German language is studied in its relations to rhetoric and logic, and as æsthetic literature; arithmetic is carried out into algebra and mixed mathematics; geography into commerce and manufactures, and into a knowledge of the various botanical and zoological productions of the different quarters of the globe; linear drawing into perspective and machine drawing, and the drawing from models of all kinds, and from objects in nature, &c. The theory and practice, not only of vocal, but of instrumental music, occupy much time. Every pupil must play on the violin; most of them play on the organ, and some on other instruments. I recollect seeing a Normal class engaged in learning the principles of Harmony. The teacher first explained the principles on which they were to proceed. He then wrote a bar of music upon the blackboard, and called upon a pupil to write such notes for another part or accompaniment, as would make *harmony* with the first. So he would write a bar with certain intervals, and then require a pupil to write another, with such intervals, as, according to the principles of musical science, would correspond with the first. A thorough course of reading on the subject of education is undertaken, as well as a more general course. Bible history is almost committed to memory. Connected with all the seminaries for teachers are large Model or Experimental Schools. During the last part of the course much of the students' time is spent in these schools. At first they go in and look on in silence, while an accomplished teacher is instructing a class. Then they themselves commence teaching under the eye of such a teacher. At last they teach a class alone, being responsible for its proficiency, and for its condition as to order, &c., at the end of a week or other period. During the whole course, there are lectures, discussions, compositions, &c., on the theory and practice of teaching. The essential qualifications of a candidate for the office, his attainments and the spirit of devotion and of religious fidelity in which he should enter upon his work; the modes of teaching the different branches; the motive-powers to be applied to the minds of children; dissertations upon the different natural dispositions of children, and consequently the different

and higher seminaries of Prussia. Certain sealed subjects for an exercise are given to the students; they are then locked up in a room, each by himself, and at the expiration of a given time, they are enlarged, and it is seen what each one has been able to make out of his faculties.

ways of addressing them, of securing their confidence and affection, and of winning them to a love of learning and a sense of duty; and especially the sacredness of the teacher's profession,—the idea that he stands, for the time being, in the place of a parent, and therefore that a parent's responsibilities rest upon him, that the most precious hopes of society are committed to his charge, and that on him depends to a great extent the temporal and perhaps the future well-being of hundreds of his fellow-creatures,—these are the conversations, the ideas, the feelings, amidst which the candidate for teaching spends his probationary years. This is the daily atmosphere he breathes. These are the sacred, elevating, invigorating influences constantly pouring in upon his soul. Hence, at the expiration of his course, he leaves the seminary to enter upon his profession, glowing with enthusiasm for the noble cause he has espoused, and strong in his resolves to perform its manifold and momentous duties.

Here then is the cause of the worth and standing of the teachers, whom I had the pleasure and the honor to see. As a body of men, their character is more enviable than that of either of the three, so-called, "professions." They have more benevolence and self-sacrifice than the legal or medical, while they have less of sanctimoniousness and austerity, less of indisposition to enter into all the innocent amusements and joyous feelings of childhood, than the clerical. They are not unmindful of what belongs to men while they are serving God; nor of the duties they owe to this world while preparing for another.

On reviewing a period of six weeks, the greater part of which I spent in visiting schools in the north and middle of Prussia and in Saxony, (excepting of course the time occupied in going from place to place,) entering the schools to hear the first recitation in the morning, and remaining until the last was completed at night, I call to mind three things about which I cannot be mistaken. In some of my opinions and inferences, I may have erred, but of the following facts, there can be no doubt:—

1. During all this time, I never saw a teacher hearing a lesson of any kind, (excepting a reading or spelling lesson,) *with a book in his hand.*

2. I never saw a teacher *sitting* while hearing a recitation.

3. Though I saw hundreds of schools, and thousands,—I think I may say, within bounds, tens of thousands of pupils,—*I never saw one child undergoing punishment, or arraigned for misconduct. I never saw one child in tears from having been punished, or from fear of being punished.*

During the above period, I witnessed exercises in geography, ancient and modern; in the German language,—from the explanation of the simplest words up to belles-lettres disquisitions, with rules for speaking and writing;—in arithmetic, algebra, geometry, surveying and trigonometry; in book-keeping; in civil history, ancient and modern; in natural philosophy; in botany and zoology; in mineralogy, where there were hundreds of specimens; in the endless variety of the exercises in thinking,

knowledge of nature, of the world and of society; in Bible history and in Bible knowledge;—and, as I before said, in no one of these cases did I see a teacher with a book in his hand. His book,—his books,—his library, was in his head. Promptly, without pause, without hesitation, from the rich resources of his own mind, he brought forth whatever the occasion demanded. I remember calling one morning at a country school in Saxony, where everything about the premises, and the appearance both of teacher and children, indicated very narrow pecuniary circumstances. As I entered, the teacher was just ready to commence a lesson or lecture on French history. He gave not only the events of a particular period in the history of France, but mentioned as he proceeded all the contemporary sovereigns of neighboring nations. The ordinary time for a lesson, here as elsewhere, was an hour. This was somewhat longer, for towards the close, the teacher entered upon a train of thought from which it was difficult to break off, and rose to a strain of eloquence which it was delightful to hear. The scholars were all absorbed in attention. They had paper, pen and ink before them, and took brief notes of what was said. When the lesson touched upon contemporary events in other nations,—which, as I suppose, had been the subject of previous lessons,—the pupils were questioned concerning them. A small text-book of history was used by the pupils, which they studied at home.

I ought to say further, that I generally visited schools without guide, or letter of introduction,—presenting myself at the door, and asking the favor of admission. Though I had a general order from the Minister of Public Instruction, commanding all schools, gymnasia and universities in the kingdom to be opened for my inspection, yet I seldom exhibited it, or spoke of it,—at least not until I was about departing. I preferred to enter as a private individual, an uncommended visitor.

I have said that I saw no teacher *sitting*, in his school. Aged or young, all stood. Nor did they stand apart and aloof in sullen dignity. They mingled with their pupils, passing rapidly from one side of the class to the other, animating, encouraging, sympathizing, breathing life into less active natures, assuring the timid, distributing encouragement and endearment to all. The looks of the Prussian teacher often have the expression and vivacity of an actor in a play. He gesticulates like an orator. His body assumes all the attitudes, and his face puts on all the variety of expression, which a public speaker would do, if haranguing a large assembly on a topic vital to their interests.

It may seem singular, and perhaps to some almost ludicrous, that a teacher, in expounding the first rudiments of handwriting, in teaching the difference between a hair-stroke and a ground-stroke, or how an *l* may be turned into a *b* or a *u* into a *w*, should be able to work himself up into an oratorical fervor, should attitudinize, and gesticulate, and stride from one end of the class to the other, and appear in every way to be as intensely engaged as an advocate when arguing an important cause to a jury;—but, strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless true; and before five minutes of such a lesson had elapsed, I have seen

the children wrought up to an excitement proportionally intense, hanging upon the teacher's lips, catching every word he says, and evincing great elation or depression of spirits, as they had or had not succeeded in following his instructions. So I have seen the same rhetorical vehemence on the part of the teacher, and the same interest and animation on the part of the pupils, during a lesson on the original sounds of the letters,—that is, the difference between the long and the short sound of a vowel, or the different ways of opening the mouth in sounding the consonants *b* and *p*. This zeal of the teacher enkindles the scholars. He charges them with his own electricity to the point of explosion. Such a teacher has no idle, mischievous, whispering children around him, nor any occasion for the rod. He does not make desolation of all the active and playful impulses of childhood and call it peace; nor, to secure stillness among his scholars, does he find it necessary to ride them with the nightmare of fear. I rarely saw a teacher put questions with his lips alone. He seems so much interested in his subject, (though he might have been teaching the same lesson for the hundredth or five hundredth time,) that his whole body is in motion;—eyes, arms, limbs, all contributing to the impression he desires to make; and at the end of an hour, both he and his pupils come from the work all glowing with excitement.

Suppose a lawyer in one of our courts were to plead an important cause before a jury, but instead of standing and extemporizing, and showing by his gestures, and by the energy and ardor of his whole manner, that he felt an interest in his theme, instead of rising with his subject and coruscating with flashes of genius and wit, he should plant himself lazily down in a chair, read from some old book which scarcely a member of the panel could fully understand, and, after droning away for an hour, should leave them, without having distinctly impressed their minds with one fact, or led them to form one logical conclusion;—would it be any wonder if he left half of them joking with each other, or asleep;—would it be any wonder,—provided he were followed on the other side by an advocate of brilliant parts, of elegant diction and attractive manner,—who should pour sunshine into the darkest recesses of the case,—if he lost not only his own reputation, but the cause of his client also?

These incitements and endearments of the teacher, this personal ubiquity, as it were, among all the pupils in the class, prevailed much more, as the pupils were younger. Before the older classes, the teacher's manner became calm and didactic. The habit of attention being once formed, nothing was left for subsequent years or teachers, but the easy task of maintaining it. Was there ever such a comment as this on the practice of hiring cheap teachers because the school is young, or incompetent ones because it is backward!

In Prussia and in Saxony, as well as in Scotland, the power of commanding and retaining the attention of a class is held to be a *sine qua non* in a teacher's qualifications. If he has not talent, skill, vivacity, or resources of anecdote and wit, sufficient to arouse and retain the attention of his pupils during the

accustomed period of recitation, he is deemed to have mistaken his calling, and receives a significant hint to change his vocation.

Take a group of little children to a toy-shop, and witness their out-bursting eagerness and delight. They need no stimulus of badges or prizes to arrest or sustain their attention; they need no quickening of their faculties by rod or ferule. To the exclusion of food and sleep, they will push their inquiries, until shape, color, quality, use, substance both external and internal, of the objects around them, are exhausted; and each child will want the show-man wholly to himself. But in all the boundless variety and beauty of nature's works; in that profusion and prodigality of charms with which the Creator has adorned and enriched every part of his creation; in the delights of affection; in the extatic joys of benevolence; in the absorbing interest which an unsophisticated conscience instinctively takes in all questions of right and wrong;—in all these, is there not as much to challenge and command the attention of a little child, as in the curiosities of a toy-shop? When as much of human art and ingenuity shall have been expended upon teaching as upon toys, there will be less difference between the cases.

The third circumstance I mentioned above was the beautiful relation of harmony and affection which subsisted between teacher and pupils. I cannot say that the extraordinary fact I have mentioned was not the result of chance or accident. Of the probability of that, others must judge. I can only say that, during all the time mentioned, I never saw a blow struck, I never heard a sharp rebuke given, I never saw a child in tears, nor arraigned at the teacher's bar for any alleged misconduct. On the contrary, the relation seemed to be one of duty first, and then affection, on the part of the teacher,—of affection first, and then duty, on the part of the scholar. The teacher's manner was better than parental, for it had a parent's tenderness and vigilance, without the foolish doatings or indulgences to which parental affection is prone. I heard no child ridiculed, sneered at, or scolded, for making a mistake. On the contrary, whenever a mistake was made, or there was a want of promptness in giving a reply, the expression of the teacher was that of grief and disappointment, as though there had been a failure, not merely to answer the question of a master, but to comply with the expectations of a friend. No child was disconcerted, disabled, or bereft of his senses, through fear. Nay, generally, at the ends of the answers, the teacher's practice is to encourage him with the exclamation, "good," "right," "wholly right," &c., or to check him, with his slowly and painfully articulated "no;" and this is done with a tone of voice that marks every degree of *plus* and *minus* in the scale of approbation and regret.

[To be continued.]